

## Towards All India Party Congress

# PLEDGE FOR TWO-FOLD STRUGGLE ECHOED IN KERALA AND HARYANA STATE CONFERENCES

"Release a two-fold struggle. On the one hand the members are to conduct an intensive ideological-political struggle to acquire more and more adequacy in communist character. On the other hand, they are to organise, conduct and lead class and mass struggles conducive to the anti-capitalist socialist revolution". These words of the Central Committee echoed through the deliberations, through the conduct and pledges of the delegates at the Conferences in far flung States towards the All India Party Congress. The message is being carried to the masses.

### KERALA

The Kerala State unit of the party went through its first State Conference in Trivandrum from February 6 to 9 last. The conference began with an open inaugural session on February 6 at the V.J.T. Hall.

The ruling Left Democratic Front took to its usual disruptive course by preventing in the last hour the holding of the open session at the Gandhi Park, the venue initially fixed for the purpose. Although the authorities made plea of a prohibitory order served after the elections

to the local bodies, they allowed the LDF, without notice of withdrawal of the order, to hold a public meeting at the Gandhi Park immediately after the State Conference of the SUCI had concluded.

Unperturbed at this attempt of the ruling parties to obstruct the progress of the SUCI, thousands of workers, supporters, sympathisers and common people of the town took part in the procession taken out on the occasion from the PMG Junction to the V.J.T. Hall where the open session was held ultimately. Volunteer squads

in uniform led the rally which marched through the main thoroughfares, raising slogans for the All India Party Congress of the SUCI.

At the open session venue, the Red Flag was hoisted by Com. Shankar Singh, Member, Central Committee of the party. Com. Singh then placed wreath at the portrait of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, and the song on the great leader of the proletariat was sung. Com. James Joseph, Secretary, Kerala State Organising Committee, presided at this session.

Analysing the national and the international situations, Com. Shankar Singh highlighted the urging of launching a mighty united democratic mass movement against the fascist policies and onslaughts of the Central Congress(I) Government. At the same time he cautioned that without fighting revisionism, the main danger in the international communist movement, it would not be possible to fight capitalism imperialism.

Earlier, Comrade V. Venugopal, moved a resolution, condemning the prohibitory order enforced by the LDF Government. Com. Krishna Chakraborti, a Central Staff of the party, was present at the

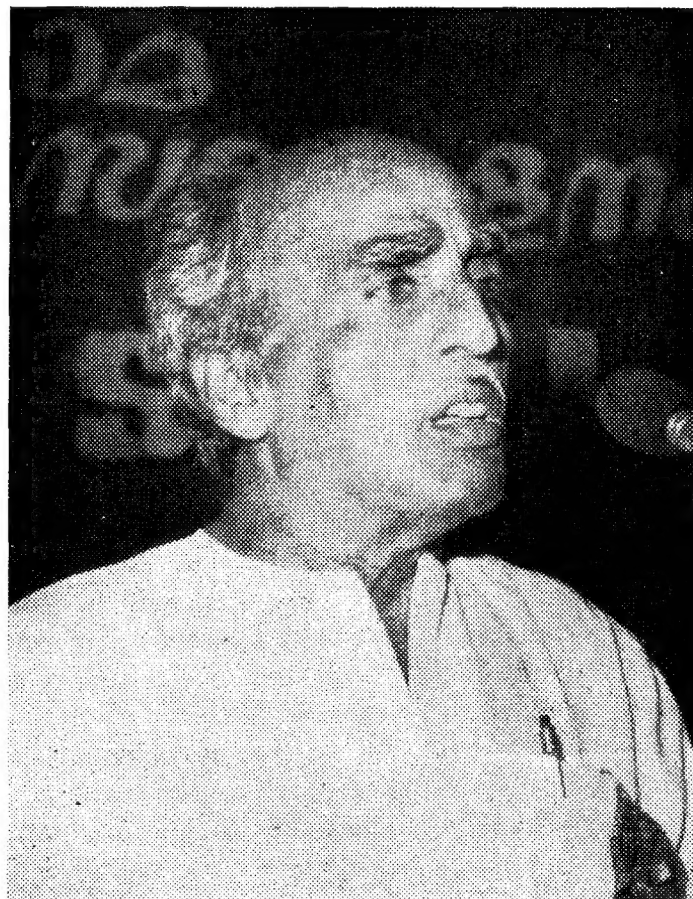
# Proletarian Era

Organ of SOCIALIST UNITY CENTRE OF INDIA

(Fortnightly)

Founder Editor-in-Chief : COMRADE SHIBDAS GHOSH

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Com. Shankar Singh, Member, Central Committee, SUCI addressing the Open Session of Kerala State Conference.

session. The session concluded with the singing of the Internationale.

The delegate sessions began on the morning of 7th with Com. Shankar Singh placing garlands at a martyrs' column and

then at a portrait of Com. Shibdas Ghosh. The song on the great leader was sung and, thereafter, silence was observed in homage to the memory of late Com. V. Natarajan who  
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## Comrade Nihar Mukherjee severely Condemns Rail and P&T Budget

Strongly protesting against the Railway Budget and the steep rise in Postal and Telephone tariffs, Com. Nihar Mukherjee, General Secretary of our party has released the following statement :

"Close on the heels of imposition of the burden of administered prices of some commodities of daily use have now come the twin attack of increased freight and fare of the Railway Budget and steep rise in postal and telephone tariffs. All this clearly epitomizes an intense crisis of the capitalist economy and total unconcern of the Central Government for the common people who are already crippled with appalling poverty and destitution and on whose shoulder falls again this axe as a result of total failure of the Government.

The Railway Budget, and entire policy of the Central Government, once more reveals the out and out anti-people character of this Government which has virtually launched an undeclared economic war of spiralling inflation against the people at large only to feed and fatten the monopolists. The Government, fully aware of people's resentment against it dares adopt such measures, taking advantage of dismal absence of united movement of the Left, democratic and Opposition parties and forces in the country.

We call upon the people to close their ranks and raise unitedly their strong voice of protest to resist this onslaught."

## First All India Party Congress of SUCI In Calcutta

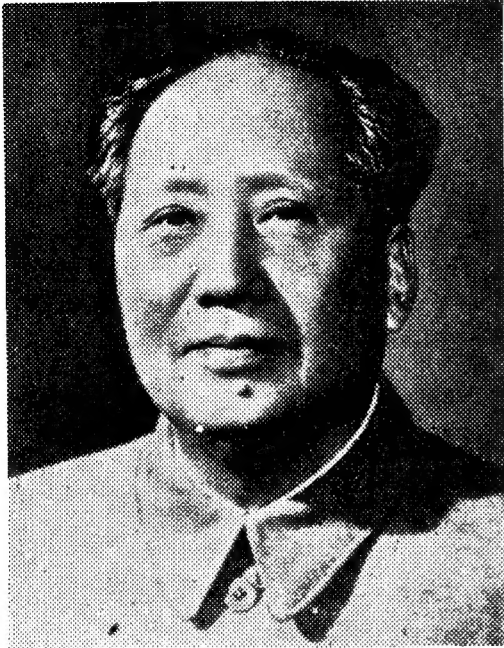
Delegate Session :

25th to 29th March 1988  
at Mahajati Sadan

Open Session : 4th April 1988  
at Brigade Parade Ground 4-00 p.m.

Speakers : Comrade Nihar Mukherjee  
& Other Leaders

President : Comrade Pritish Chanda



# DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM

*Democratic Centralism is the soul, the kernel of the living organisational unity in a communist party. Lenin taught us, democratic centralism is the fusion of centralism and proletarian democracy.*

*At an Enlarged Working Conference convened by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on January 30, 1962, Mao Zedong, brilliantly discussed how Democratic Centralism should be operated within the party; how centralism on the basis of proletarian democracy and proletarian democracy on the basis of centralism should be built up; the role of criticism and self-criticism in this connection and the great necessity of conducting this struggle involving the masses. The Communist Party of China published the speech in English in the form of a booklet in 1978.*

*Considering the importance of this illuminating speech on the understanding of Democratic Centralism we are reprinting the same in instalments.*

*(In the preamble of the first instalment published in the last issue certain errors had crept in inadvertently, which have been corrected in the above preface.*

*—Ed. Proletarian Era )*

## II

Without democracy there can't be correct centralism because centralism can't be established when people have divergent views and don't have unity of understanding. What is meant by centralism? First, there must be concentration of correct ideas. Unity of understanding, of policy, plan, command and action is attained on the basis of concentrating correct ideas. This is unity through centralism. But if all those concerned are still not clear about the problems, if their opinions are still unexpressed or their anger is still not vented, how can you achieve this unity through centralism? Without democracy, it is impossible to sum up experience correctly. Without democracy, without ideas coming from the masses, it is impossible to formulate good lines, principles, policies or measures. As far as the formulation of lines, principles, policies and measures is concerned, our leading organs merely play the role of a processing plant. Everyone knows that a factory cannot do any processing without raw material. It cannot produce good finished products unless the raw material is sufficient in quantity and suitable in quality. If there is no democracy, if there is no knowledge of what is going on down below and no clear idea about it, if there is no adequate canvassing of the opinions of all concerned and no communication between higher and lower levels, and if, instead, issues are decided solely by the leading organs of the higher level on the strength of one-sided or inaccurate material, then such decisions can hardly avoid being subjective and it will be impossible to achieve unity in understanding and action or achieve true centralism. Isn't the main topic of our present conference opposition to decentralism and the strengthening of centralism and unity? If we fail to promote democracy in full measure, then will this centralism, this unity, be genuine or sham? Will it be real or empty? Will it be correct or incorrect? Of course it will only be sham, empty and incorrect.

Our centralism is centralism built on the foundation of democracy. Proletarian centralism is centralism with a broad democratic base. The Party committees at all levels are the organs which exercise centralized leadership. But leadership by the Party committee means collective leadership, not arbitrary decision by the first secretary alone. Within Party committees, democratic centralism alone should be practised. The relationship between the first secretary and the other secretaries and committee members is one of the minority being subordinate to the majority. Take the Standing Committee or the Political Bureau of the Central Committee by way of example. It often happens that when I say something,

regardless of whether it is correct or incorrect, if the others don't agree, I must accede to their opinion because they are the majority. I am told that there are now some provincial, prefectural and county Party committees where all matters are decided by the first secretary alone. This is quite wrong. How can we justify the idea that what one person says goes? I am referring to important matters here, not to the routine work coming after decisions. If a matter is important, it must be discussed collectively, different opinions must be heeded, and the complexities of the situation and the dissenting opinions must be analysed seriously. Thought must be given to the various possibilities and estimates made of the various aspects of a situation, what is good and what bad, what is easy and what difficult, what is possible and what impossible. This should be done as carefully and thoroughly as possible. To act otherwise is just one-man tyranny. Those first secretaries should be called tyrants and not "squad leaders" practising democratic centralism. Once upon a time there was a certain Hsiang Yu, who was called the tyrant of Western Chu. He hated listening to opinions which differed from his own. One Fan Tseng offered him advice, but Hsiang Yu didn't listen to what he had to say. There was another man named Liu Pang, the founder of the Han Dynasty, who was better at accepting ideas different from his own. An intellectual called Li Yi-chi went to see Liu Pang. When he was first announced, it was as a scholar of the Confucian school, Liu Pang said there was a war on and he couldn't see scholars. Li Yi-chi flared up and said to the gatekeeper, "You get in there again and say that I'm a drinking man from Kaoyang, not a scholar." The gatekeeper did as he was told. "All right, ask him in." When Li Yi-chi entered, Liu Pang was washing his feet but he quickly got up to welcome him. Still angry because Liu Pang had refused to see a scholar, Li Yi-chi gave him a dressing down. He said, "Look here, do you want to conquer the world or don't you? Why do you take an elder so lightly?" Li Yi-chi was then over sixty and Liu Pang was younger, so Li called himself an "elder". At this, Liu Pang apologized and promptly accepted Li Yi-chi's plan of seizing the country of Chenliu. This incident can be found in the biographies of Li Yi-chi and Lu Chia in the *Historical Records*. In the feudal period, Liu Pang was described by historians as a hero "who was generous and open-minded and who readily listened to advice." Liu Pang and Hsiang Yu fought for many years. In the end Liu Pang won and Hsiang Yu was defeated. This was no accident. Today some of our first secretaries can't even match the feudal Liu Pang

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# DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM

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but have a bit of Hsiang Yu in them. If these comrades don't change, they'll ultimately be overthrown. Isn't there an opera called *The Tyrant Bids His Lady Farewell*? If these comrades remain unchanged, the day will come when they too will be "bidding their ladies farewell." (Laughter) Why do I have to put the matter so strongly? It's because I hope that by speaking a bit sarcastically, I can prick some comrades and get them to give this some hard thought. It will be best if they can't sleep for a night or two. If they can sleep, then I'll be the unhappy one because they still haven't felt any pain.

Some of our comrades can't bear to hear any opinion contrary to their own and can't tolerate any criticism. That is very wrong. During this conference, the group meeting of one province started off in a very lively manner, but as soon as the secretary of the provincial Party committee went to sit in, a hush fell and nobody said a word. Comrade provincial Party secretary, why do you go and sit there? Why don't you stay in your own room and think things over and let the others talk freely? Since such an atmosphere has been brought about and people don't dare speak in your presence, then you should absent yourself. Whoever makes mistakes must criticize himself, and we must let others speak up, let others criticize. On June 12 last year, the last day of the working conference in Peking convened by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, I discussed my own shortcomings and mistakes. I asked the comrades to convey what I said to the provinces and localities. I found out later that many localities were not informed. It's as if my mistakes could or should be kept hidden. Comrades, they mustn't be kept hidden! Of all the mistakes made by the Central Committee I am responsible for those directly related to me and I have a share of the responsibility for those not directly related to me, because I am its Chairman. It's not that I want other people to slough off their responsibility—there are some other comrades who also bear responsibility—but I am the person who ought to be primarily responsible. The secretaries of our provincial, prefectural and county Party committees, right down to the secretaries of Party committees of districts, enterprises and communes, being first secretaries, should bear responsibility for shortcomings and mistakes in work. Shirking responsibility, fearing to shoulder it and forbidding people to speak out as if one were a tiger whose backside no one dares touch—ten out of ten who adopt this attitude will fail. People will always speak out sooner or later. You think that people really won't dare to touch the backsides of tigers like you? They bloody well will!

Unless we fully promote people's democracy and inner-Party democracy and unless we fully implement proletarian democracy, it will be impossible for China to have true proletarian centralism. Without a high degree of democracy it is impossible to have a high degree of centralism, and without a high degree of centralism it is impossible to establish a socialist economy. And what will happen to our country if we fail to establish a socialist economy? It will turn into a revisionist state, indeed a bourgeois state, and the dictatorship of the proletariat will turn into a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, and a reactionary, fascist dictatorship at that. This is a question which very much deserves our vigilance and I hope our comrades will give it a good deal of thought.

Without democratic centralism, the dictatorship of the proletariat cannot be consolidated. To practise democracy among the people and to exercise dictatorship over the enemies of the people—these two aspects are not to be separated. When they are combined, we have proletarian dictatorship, or what may be called people's democratic dictatorship. Our slogan is: "A people's democratic dictator-

ship led by the proletariat and based on the alliance of the workers and peasants." How does the proletariat exercise leadership? It leads through the Communist Party. The Communist Party is the vanguard of the proletariat. The proletariat unites with all classes and strata who favour, support and participate in socialist revolution and socialist construction, and exercises dictatorship over the reactionary classes or rather their remnants. In our country where the system of exploitation of man by man has already been abolished and the economic base of the landlord class and the bourgeoisie done away with, the reactionary classes are also no longer as formidable as in the past. For example, they are no longer as formidable as in 1949 when the People's Republic was founded, or as in 1957 when the bourgeois Rightists frenziedly attacked us. Therefore, we speak of them as the remnants of the reactionary classes. But in no case should we underestimate these remnants. We must carry on our struggle against them. The reactionary classes which have been overthrown still seek a comeback. And in socialist society new bourgeois elements continue to emerge. Classes and class struggle exist throughout the socialist stage. This struggle is long and complex and at times even very acute. Our instruments of dictatorship must be strengthened, not weakened. Our public security system is in the hands of comrades who follow the correct line. But it is possible that security departments in one place or another are in the hands of bad people. And there are also a few comrades doing public security work who don't rely on the masses or on the Party. In ferreting out counter-revolutionaries, they don't follow the line of working through the masses under the leadership of the Party committees, but rely solely on secret work, on so-called professional work. Professional work is necessary; investigation and interrogation are absolutely necessary in dealing with counter-revolutionaries. But the most important thing is to follow the mass line under the leadership of the Party committee. It is especially necessary to rely on the masses and the Party in exercising dictatorship over the reactionary classes as a whole. Dictatorship over the reactionary classes does not mean the physical elimination of all reactionary class elements; the aim is to remould them, to remould them by suitable methods, to make them into new men. Without broad democracy for the people, it is impossible for the dictatorship of the proletariat to be consolidated or for political power to be stable. Without democracy, without arousing the masses and without supervision by the masses, it is impossible to exercise effective dictatorship over the reactionaries and bad elements or to remould them effectively; they will continue to make trouble and may stage a comeback. We must be vigilant on this question, and I hope comrades will give it a good deal of thought too.

The third point; Which classes should we unite with and which classes should we repress? This is a question of basic stand.

The working class should unite with the peasantry, the urban petty-bourgeoisie and the patriotic national bourgeoisie, and first and foremost, with the peasantry. Intellectuals such as scientists, engineers and technicians, professors, teachers, writers, artists, actors, medical workers and journalists do not constitute a class; they are attached either to the bourgeoisie or to the proletariat. Are we to unite only with those intellectuals who are revolutionary? No. So long as intellectuals are patriotic, we shall unite with them and help them do their work well. Workers, peasants, urban petty-bourgeois elements, patriotic intellectuals, patriotic capitalists and other patriotic democrats together comprise more than 95 per cent of the population. Under our people's democratic dictatorship, they all belong to the category of the people. And among the people we must practise democracy.

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## Comrade Tapas Dutta General Secretary U.T.U.C. (LS) Attends World Conference on T.U.I.E.S in Paris

Organised by the International Preparatory Committee consisting of representatives of various national, international and regional trade unions of different affinities a 'World Conference' on Trade Unions and International Economic Security' was held in Paris from 1st to 3rd February last. Trade union delegations from as many as 74 countries and 172 national, regional and international trade union organisations participated in the conference. Also participated the ILO and UNCTAD. Comrade Tapas Datta, General Secretary, UTUC (Lenin Sarani) attended this conference as one of the delegates from India.

The conference deliberated mainly over the worsening conditions of workers and the massive increase in unemployment, decline in real wages, threats to social welfare systems, attacks on social rights, working conditions and trade union rights, etc., in the perspective of the increased insecurity in the national economy of the capitalist countries and in the international economic relations.

Except in a few cases, the general tone of the discussion, however, suffered from lack of correct scientific working class outlook and emphasis was on finding solution in a 'New Economic Order' (NEO) but not in any 'New World Socialist Order', that is, a 'World Socialist System'.

At the conference, Comrade Tapas Datta addressed a workshop on 'Disarmament for Development'.

In course of his short but distinctive speech Com. Datta drew attention to how the imperialist and capitalist countries — both developed and developing — were expending their national wealth on military build-ups. For example, the world military expenditure in 1950 which stood at \$50 billion has risen to \$1000 billion today. Only one percent of this stupendous military spending could have been enough to provide food and necessary calorie requirement to the 200 million under-nourished children of the world. Imperialists of the world, particularly the US imperialism, are continuously arming other countries with deadly weapons to mint fabulous profit from arms trade. Defying all international

norms and treaties the US multinationals have been engaging themselves in the heinous act of experimenting in other countries on poison gases used in warfare for mass killing. In this context, he referred to the Bhopal Gas Tragedy in India. He observed that it was a shame that the Indian Government accorded permission for carrying out such experiments with poison gas in densely populated areas despite repeated protests from the local people and people's organisations including trade unions. The developing countries also showed high trend of militarization. In countries like India technology for this purpose is being imported from the USA and other imperialist countries, causing a huge drainage from the foreign exchange reserves, pushing the country's economy into foreign debt traps. The import of super computer that a country like India contracts with the USA is not for civilian but for military purposes.

With a feeling of pain, Comrade Datta pointed out before the world forum that in India, where 75 percent of the total population were living below the poverty line, where the largest portion of cultivable land remained unirrigated, without fertilizer and the country was facing severe draught, flood and famine every year the government was out to install a missile base at a cost of Rs. 40,000 crores on a most fertile land known as the 'granary of Orissa' in Baleswar district of Orissa evicting 50 thousand or more peasants therefrom. In this connection, he observed, India, though a less

developed country in the capitalist world, had been following a course of rapid militarization from its hegemonistic and growing imperialistic ambition to become a big military power, particularly, in this region. It may sound astonishing that in India non-developmental expenditure in which the military budget takes the largest chunk shows an awesome rate of increase from Rs. 13,062 crores in 1980-81 to Rs. 39,266 crores in 1987-88.

The real reason for this growing trend of militarization of the economy was nothing but for using it as an 'artificial stimulant' for the sagging capitalist economy, as Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, the revered departed President of the UTUC (LS) had pointed out long before. While analysing the intimate relationship between militarization and local and partial wars, Comrade Ghosh showed that even the war industries would not be free from the impact of recession if there were no periodic release of stockpiles of arms through wars. He also showed that militarization as an 'artificial stimulant' was also bound to exhaust itself someday and act as a boomerang—as we witness now. The US economy is plagued today by heavy deficits both in budget and in foreign trades, the major factor being the high rate of militarization.

Referring to the limitations of the much trumpeted Reagan-Gorbachov Arms Limitation Treaty Comrade Datta placed some concrete points before the Conference for consideration, namely:

1. None should forget the Leninist teaching that so long imperialism would exist, the danger of war would remain. But so long as the working class have not been able to overthrow this outmoded and most perverse social order in their respective countries, a new type of world wide militant peace movement, free from the pacifist illusions and embracing the broader section

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## Treachery Unabashed!

It is a shame, shame to the heritage of militant trade union movement in West Bengal. For, the recently concluded agreement with the Central Government jointly signed by the 'Left Front' trade union leaders and the Congress(I) trade union leader, backstabbing the one and half month long strike of eighty seven thousand engineering workers and employees of Central Government Undertakings in West Bengal will remain as a dark example of treachery in the history of trade union movement, particularly in West Bengal.

These eighty seven thousand engineering workers and employees of the Central Government Undertakings in West Bengal had been conducting heroically indefinite strike against the most autocratic, discriminatory and arbitrary decision of the Central Government to keep these workers and employees of West Bengal outside the purview of the all India settlement in respect of giving dearness allowance and other financial benefits which their counterparts all over India have been entitled to since January 1986.

By this black agreement in West Bengal the main demand of interim D.A. on All India pattern applicable in other states has been surrendered; the workers and employees here have been denied of the arrear interim D.A. of Rs. 115/- p.m. from January 1986 which are being paid in other states. They will get arrear from January 1988 and a lump sum settlement money of Rs. 1200/- only whereas no pay and allowances will be paid for the strike period of 45 days. Moreover this agreement will remain in force upto 1990 and if there be any wage or D.A. increase in all India level that will not automatically take effect in West Bengal—such workers and employees in this state will have to go in for separate settlement and have to fight for it separately again. That is, they are left outside the all India purview as before—the very cause against which they had come out to fight for these 45 days.

Not only this, this agreement puts the final seal in this regard for the workers and employees in West Bengal whereas their colleagues in the rest of India are getting interim D.A. while awaiting a final

revision by which, it is expected, they would get further benefit. In West Bengal the workers and employees will automatically be denied that benefit.

Secondly, the workers and employees of the nationalised or taken over jute mills and a section of clerical staff of engineering undertakings have been excluded from agreement although they also had participated in the strike on the same demand. And thus they have been left either at the mercy of the Central Government or of the respective managements. It is nothing but sheer betrayal to these workers and employees. Still, it is a 'historic victory'! Historic indeed, for this treachery has hardly a parallel in the history of trade union agreement in West Bengal!

Condemning this agreement Com. Pravash Ghosh, Secretary, West Bengal State Committee of the SUCI has said, inter alia, in a statement issued on 28.1.88:

"It exposes most nakedly now in the interest of the capitalist state and its government, both the Congress(I) and the 'Left Front' are united to break workers' movements.

It is proved once again that without the correct leadership, working class cannot march ahead even after a brave and determined struggle."

But it is a matter of pride and hope that in spite of the treachery of the CITU, AITUC and other leaderships in league with the INTUC the fighting leadership of UTUC (Lenin Sarani), HMS and IFTU have unequivocally refused to sign this black agreement and held high the working class interest.



## TAMIL NADU CRISIS

# Reflection of Nasty Bourgeois Politics

The entire proceedings of the so-called motion of No Confidence against Mrs Janaki Ramchandran in the Tamil Nadu Assembly on January 28 last demonstrated once again the filthy extent to which the ruling parties could go, making a mockery of parliamentary democracy. In the outcome, Mrs Janaki managed to retain her perch as the State's Chief Minister, though temporarily; but, in doing so, perhaps the last vestiges of bourgeois democracy and the modicum of dignity of the Assembly still there were given a burial! In the turmoil that ensued on the floor of the Assembly on the day, the trigger, no doubt, was pressed in by the speaker Mr. Pandian himself by his outrageous behaviour of mass dismissal of MLAs, invoking the Anti-defection law. Yet, in another unprecedented development, steel-helmeted, lathi-wielding policemen entered the Assembly only to put the members already engaged in fisticuffs into straight jacket.

After the demise of the matinee idol turned Chief Minister, M. G. Ramchandran, in whose incumbency Tamil Nadu could maintain a facade of stability for about a decade, events drifted quickly taking the shape of a disastrous legacy. With days passing by, the future seemed even more bleak and uncertain in the face of possible horse-trading of MLAs although the drifting situation came to a halt with the clamping of President's Rule after a month-long bizarre politics of succession struggle. Needless to say, the succession struggle ensued between the two contending factions of the AIADMK —the Jayalalitha faction versus Janaki playing proxy in the hands of the Veerappan group. The contention for the chair of Chief Minister between the two arch-rival factions inside the AIADMK turned out to be a trial of strength in more than one way after the State Governor, Mr. Khurana, stirred a controversy by stating that Mrs. Janaki needed to prove majority among only those MLAs present in the Assembly. Evidently, the Governor, by so declaring, overruled the view that in order to win the No Confidence Motion, Mrs. Janaki would have to muster a majority of the total membership in the Assembly.

So, taking the cue, when the speaker Mr. Pan-

dian declared that the Janaki Ministry had won its majority, not even the half members were present in the 235 seat House. In the fitness of things, all credit must go to Mr. Pandian for reducing the Legislative Assembly to the level of a 'rough house'. For that Mr. Pandian can hardly be blamed inasmuch as he had already earned a notoreity by showing his scant regard for basic bourgeois parliamentary propriety in the past by disqualifying seven DMK MLAs.

Now, from the mad race of succession struggle, one pertinent question is bound to arise: Whether promulgation of the President's Rule, meaning the indirect rule of the Central Congress(I) was inescapable or not. Herein comes into the question of double-faced role played by the Congress(I). Events would have taken quite a different turn and surely the State would not have to plunge into the rule of the Central Congress(I) and consequently go through a costly exercise of fresh elections at the cost of public exchequer, if the Congress (I) had not a scheming design to seize the unfolding condition associated with the imposition of central rule. While examining the Tamil Nadu politics, one must keep in mind the seemingly distant background of the mischievous

role played by the Congress in engineering a split in the DMK into two factions — DMK and AIADMK. And the Congress(I) after all had made a permanent place for itself in Tamil Nadu politics by riding on the AIADMK faction. Now, in the changed context of President's Rule, in the contention for Governmental power between the Janaki-Veerappan combine and the Jayalalitha-Nedunchezian faction, the Congress(I) took the stance of neutrality between the two. "We are for a united AIADMK to succeed MGR", said its official spokesman. Prima facie, with this pose of neutrality in the air, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi went on meeting both the factions privately in New Delhi and till the last minute before its going in for the No Confidence Motion against Mrs. Janaki Ramachandra, she was made to believe that the Congress, at any rate, would stand by her side. The last minute volte-face of the Congress(I) vis-a-vis Mrs. Janaki is nothing but a manoeuvre tactic, very much part and parcel of its scheming design to finally split up the AIADMK into two. Anybody in the know of AIADMK politics knew it very well the perpetuating feud between Veerappan and Jayalalitha within the AIADMK and none would hope for their pulling together once Mr. MGR was no more. Knowing fully well this fact as also the more crowd pulling capacity and hold on the ordinary party workers by Mrs. Jayalalitha, the Congress(I) led by Mr. Rajiv Gandhi skillfully played between the two factions behind the stance of neutrality and successfully came up in its wake, roping in Jayalalitha's support, after bringing upon a vertical split in the AIADMK.

Yet, there is another factor brewing up in the State politics which had also to be taken into account. The growing dis-

content among the people of Tamil Nadu over the role played by the IPKF in Sri Lanka and the consequent demand for withdrawal of the Indian Peace Keeping Force from the island gaining in strength over which already the DMK, another contending parochial parliamentary party, is making its role felt, the Congress (I), in that event, may find it hard to keep the Tamil sentiments at bay. This has all the more pulled Mr. Rajiv Gandhi to create a condition centring round the perpetuating feud between the two factions inside the AIADMK which paves the way for imposition of Central Rule. Needless to say, Mrs. Jayalalitha would in no way be lacking in toeing in of New Delhi's line on the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord; nor does her loyalty affect in any way to the Congress (I)'s fascist design as well.

It is clear that none of the two factions has any concern for the people's interest, for their burning problems in life and for that the most vital question of the people's unity. None of the factions see any long term danger in the language policy of the Centre to which, at least, the contending factions pay lip service. To them any questions concerning the people's vital interest is a means of how to reap rich

dividends by using this or that leverage. Paradoxically, Mrs. Janaki Ramchandran fraction of the AIADMK which tried its best to mobilise Congress(I) support to remain in and retain power and created an unprecedented and black record of riding roughshod over the remnants of bourgeois democracy just the other day, is now posing to play the role of Opposition in parliamentary politics in New Delhi now out of power in the State! Be that as it may, what concerns us most along with all democratic-minded and well-meaning people is the rapid erosion of democratic norms and values. The opportunist alliance of the Congress(I) or of other parties with this or that faction of a regional party like the AIADMK, all the more demonstrates a continuing phenomenon of the ganging up of the pro-fascist forces. This is fraught with grave danger. So, if the well-meaning people as well as the Left and democratic and Opposition parties and forces are seriously concerned over the gloomy situation, then they will have to grasp the gravity of this erosion of democratic norms and values. Only a counter current with higher culture and ethics can help to protect, restore and extend the democratic rights, norms and values of the people.

Statement about ownership and other particulars about newspaper PROLETARIAN ERA to be published in the first issue after last day of February:

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Sd/- SUKOMAL DASGUPTA  
Signature of Publisher

# DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM

(Contd. from page 3)

Those whom the people's democratic dictatorship should repress are landlords, rich peasants, counter-revolutionaries, bad elements and anti-Communist Rightists. The counter-revolutionaries, bad elements and anti-Communist Rightists represent the landlord class and the reactionary bourgeoisie. These classes and bad people comprise about 4 or 5 per cent of the population. It is they whom we must compel to undergo remoulding. It is they who are the object of the people's democratic dictatorship.

With whom do we stand? With the masses who comprise over 95 per cent of the population? Or with the landlords, rich peasants, counter-revolutionaries, bad elements and Rightists who comprise 4 or 5 per cent of the population? We must side with the people and never with their enemies. For a Marxist-Leninist this is a question of basic stand.

Just as this holds true within our country, it also holds true internationally. Sooner or later, the people of all countries, the masses comprising more than 90 per cent of the world's population, will want revolution and support Marxism-Leninism. They won't support revisionism; though some people may support it for a while, they will eventually cast it aside. They are bound to awaken gradually, they are bound to oppose imperialism and reaction, and they are bound to oppose revisionism. A true Marxist-Leninist must stand firmly on the side of the masses who comprise over 90 per cent of the world's population.

The fourth point: Understanding the objective world.

Man's understanding of the objective world, his leap from the realm of necessity to the realm of freedom, involves a process. Take, for instance, the question of how to carry out the democratic revolution in China. From its founding in 1927 to its Seventh Congress in 1945, twenty-four years elapsed before our Party reached complete unity of understanding on this question. During this period we underwent a Partywide rectification movement which lasted three and a half years, from the spring of 1942 to the summer of 1945. It was a thoroughgoing movement and the method of democracy was adopted, that is to say, no matter who had made mistakes, it was all right provided he realized and corrected them. What is more, everybody helped him to realize and correct them. This was called "learning from past mistakes to avoid future ones and curing the sickness to save the patient" or "starting from the desire for unity, distinguishing right from wrong through criticism or struggle, and arriving at a new unity on a new basis." It was at that time that the formula "unity—criticism—unity" came into being. The rectification movement helped the comrades of the whole Party to reach unity of understanding. It was in that period, and especially after the rectification movement, that the problems of how the democratic revolution ought to be conducted and how the general line of the Party and its specific policies ought to be formulated were completely solved.

In the period between the founding of the Party and the War of Resistance Against Japan, we had the Northern Expedition and the ten years of the Agrarian Revolutionary War. We won two victories and met with two defeats. The Northern Expedition was victorious, but in 1927 the revolution suffered a defeat. Spectacular successes were achieved in the Agrarian Revolutionary War and the Red Army grew to a strength of 300,000. But later we again suffered reverses and our army of 300,000 was reduced to only some 20,000 in the Long March. After it reached northern Shensi, it took in some recruits but still fell short of 30,000, that is, less than one-tenth of the original 300,000. After all, which was stronger, the army of 300,000 or the army of less than

30,000? The army of less than 30,000, because having sustained those heavy reverses and gone through those extreme hardships, we had become tempered and experienced and had rectified the erroneous line and restored the correct line. In the report to this conference, it is said that we have become stronger, not weaker, because our line was correct and our achievements were primary in the past four years and because we have become experienced through making mistakes in our practical work and suffering from them. This is exactly how things stand. In the period of the democratic revolution, we came to understand this objective world of China only after we had experienced victory, then defeat, victory again, then defeat again, only after we had twice drawn comparisons. On the eve and in the course of the War of Resistance Against Japan, I wrote a number of essays, such as *Problems of Strategy in China's Revolutionary War*, *On Protracted War*, *On New Democracy* and *Introducing "The Communist"*, and I drafted a number of documents on policy and tactics for the Central Committee. All of them sum up revolutionary experience. These essays and documents could only be written at that time and not before, because until then we hadn't been through storm and stress and couldn't compare our two victories and two defeats, and therefore we weren't adequately experienced and couldn't fully understand the laws governing the Chinese revolution.

Generally speaking, it was the Chinese, and not the comrades of the Communist International handling Chinese problems, who succeeded in gaining an understanding of this objective world of China. These comrades in the Communist International didn't understand Chinese society, the Chinese nation, and the Chinese revolution—or we can say that they didn't understand them well. For a long time we ourselves failed to have a clear understanding of China as an objective world, not to mention the foreign comrades!

It was not until the period of the War of Resistance Against Japan that we formulated a general line for the Party and a whole set of specific policies that suited the prevailing conditions. It was only then that we came to understand the Chinese democratic revolution, this realm of necessity, and that we gained freedom. By that time, we had already been making revolution for some twenty years. Through all those years there was a considerable degree of blindness in our revolutionary work. If anyone claims that any comrade—for instance, any comrade of the Central Committee, or for that matter I myself—completely understood the laws governing the Chinese revolution right from the start, then he is a braggart and you must on no account believe him. It just wasn't so. In the past, and especially in the early years, all we had was a passion for revolution, but when it came to how to make revolution, what the targets were, which targets should come first and which later, and which had to wait until the next stage, we didn't have clear or at least wholly clear ideas for a fairly long time. In giving a historical account of how we Chinese Communists got to know, with much difficulty yet successfully, the laws governing the Chinese revolution in the period of democratic revolution, I hope to guide comrades to understand one thing: that getting to know the laws governing the building of socialism necessarily involves a process. We must take practice as the starting-point and move from having no experience to having some experience, from having little experience to having more experience, from the still unknown realm of necessity, namely, the building of socialism, to the realm of freedom, a leap in cognition—the attainment of freedom through the gradual overcoming of our blindness and the gradual understanding of the objective laws.

(Contd. on page 7)



## DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM

( Contd. from page 6 )

We still lack experience in the building of socialism. I've discussed this problem with delegations of fraternal Parties from several countries. I told them that we had no experience in building a socialist economy.

I have also discussed this problem with some journalists from capitalist countries, among them an American called Edgar Snow. He had long wanted to come to China, and in 1960 we let him. I had a talk with him. I said, "As you know, we have a set of experiences, a set of principles, policies and measures with regard to political and military affairs, to class struggle; but when it comes to socialist construction, we hadn't done any in the past, and we still don't have experience. You may say, 'Haven't you been at it for eleven years?' Well yes, we have, but we still lack knowledge and experience. Even if we are beginning to acquire a little, it doesn't amount to much." Snow wanted me to say something about China's long-term construction plans. I said, "I don't know," and he said, "You're being too cautious." I replied, "It's not a question of being cautious. I really don't know, we just don't have the experience." Comrades, it's true that we don't know, we still lack experience and really don't have such long-term plans yet. Nineteen-sixty was the very year we ran into a lot of difficulties. In 1961 I spoke of these things again during a discussion with Montgomery. He said, "In another 50 years you'll be terrific." What he meant was that after 50 years we would become powerful and would be "aggressive" towards others, but not before that. He had already expressed this view to me when in China in 1960. I said, "We are Marxist-Leninists, ours is a socialist state, not a capitalist state, and therefore we won't perpetrate aggression against others whether in 100 years or 10,000 years. As for the construction of a powerful socialist economy in China, 50 years won't be enough, it will take 100 years or even more. In your own country the development of capitalism has taken several hundred years. We won't count the sixteenth century, since the Middle Ages weren't over yet. But from the seventeenth century to the present is already more than 360 years. In our country, the building of a powerful socialist economy will take more than 100 years, I reckon." What period was the seventeenth century? It was the end of the Ming and the beginning of the Ching Dynasty. Another century was to elapse before we came to the first half of the eighteenth century, or the Chien Lung period of the Ching Dynasty, the period when the author of *The Dream of the Red Chamber*, Tsao Hsueh-chin, lived, a period which gave birth to fictional characters like Chia Pao-yu, who was dissatisfied with the feudal system. In the Chien Lung period, the buds of capitalist relations of production already existed in China, but it remained a feudal society. Such is the social background of the emergence of the multitude of fictional characters in the *Takuan Garden*. Before this, in the seventeenth century, capitalism was already developing in a number of European countries. It has taken over 300 years for the capitalist productive forces to develop to their present state. Socialism is vastly superior to capitalism and our economy will develop faster than those of the capitalist countries. But China has a large population, had little to start with and is economically backward, so that in my opinion it will be impossible for her to effect a tremendous expansion of the productive forces to catch up with and overtake the world's most advanced capitalist countries in less than 100 years. Perhaps it will actually take only a few decades—say, 50 years, as some people envisage. If it does turn out that way, we'll thank heaven and earth and it will be wonderful! But I

would advise comrades to anticipate more difficulties and so to envisage a somewhat longer period. It took more than 300 years to build up a powerful capitalist economy; what would be wrong with building a powerful socialist economy in our country in about 50 to 100 years? The next 50 to 100 years or so, beginning from now, will be a great era of radical change in the social system throughout the world, an earth-shaking era without equal in any previous historical period. Living in such an era, we must be prepared to engage in tremendous struggles which in form will have many features different from those of struggles in the past. In this undertaking, we must integrate in the best possible way the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism with the concrete realities of China's socialist construction and with those of the world revolution now and in the future and, through practice, gradually get to know the objective laws of struggle. We must be prepared to suffer many failures and setbacks resulting from our blindness, and thereby gain experience and win final victory. When we see things in this light, there are many advantages in envisaging a longer period of time, whereas harm might result from envisaging a shorter period.

In socialist construction, we are still acting blindly to a very large extent. For us the socialist economy in many respects a still unknown realm of necessity. Take me by way of example. There are many problems in the work of economic construction which I still don't understand. I know very little about industry and commerce for instance. I know something about agriculture, but this is only relatively speaking—I still don't know much. To know more about agriculture one should understand soils, botany, crop cultivation, agro-chemistry, farm machinery and so on. One should also understand the different branches of agriculture, such as grain, cotton, edible oil, hemp, silk, tea, sugar, vegetables, tobacco, fruit, medicinal herbs and miscellaneous products. There are animal husbandry and forestry too. I myself am a believer in the theory of the Soviet soil scientist V. R. Williams. In his work on soil Williams advocated combining farming, forestry and animal husbandry. I think we must have this three-way combination, or agriculture will suffer. I would advise comrades to make a serious study of all these problems of agricultural production when you have some respite from work. I too would like to study them a little more. Up to now, however, my knowledge of these matters has been very scanty. I have paid rather more attention to problems relating to the relations of production, to the system. When it comes to the productive forces, I know very little. As for our Party as a whole, our knowledge of socialist construction is very inadequate. In the forthcoming period we should accumulate experience and study hard, and in the course of practice gradually deepen our understanding and become clearer on the laws of socialist construction. We must put in a lot of hard work and investigate and study it in earnest. We must go down to selected spots at the grass roots, to the production brigades and production teams, and to the factories and shops. We used to do rather well in making investigation and study, but after we entered the cities we didn't do it seriously. In 1961 we pushed it once again, and now the situation has changed somewhat. But it has not yet become common practice among the leading cadres—especially senior leading cadres—in some places, departments and enterprises. Some provincial Party secretaries have still not gone down to stay at selected spots. If the provincial Party secretaries don't go, how can they ask prefectural Party secretaries and county Party secretaries to do so? This is bad and must be changed.

( To be concluded )

## Kerala and Haryana State Conference

(Contd. from page 1)

was a leading member of the first State Organising Committee and Quilon District Secretary of the party.

The tasks of the Congress were explained by Com. Shankar Singh, and thereafter, Com. James Joseph placed the organisational report which was adopted unanimously together with some minor amendments. In the next sessions, comrades discussed in detail the Draft Constitution and the Draft Theses on National and International situations. These 3 drafts were also adopted unanimously along with some minor amendments.

A 12 member State Committee with Com. C. K. Lukose as General Secretary was elected unanimously by the Conference. Delegates to the All India Party Congress were also elected by the Conference.

In his concluding speech Com. Singh urged the delegates to fulfil the tasks for making the Party Congress a success in every way. He exhorted them to take initiatives individually and collectively towards

fulfilment of the tasks. With the singing *Internationale* the Conference came to conclusion.

### HARYANA

The first State Conference of the party was held in Rohtak from January 27 to 29 and the open session was held on February 2. Workers, peasants, students, youths, women and office employees thronged the meeting ground of the open session where Com. Ashutosh Banerjee, a Central Staff of the party and the main speaker on the occasion, called upon the people to shed illusion and strengthen the SUCI, the only dependable instrument of their struggle against capitalist exploitation and oppression. Analysing the national situation, Com. Banerjee stressed the urgency of forging a broad based united front of all Left, democratic and Opposition parties and forces to frustrate the bourgeois bid to drive the country to allout fascism.

In a resolution at the open session the Conference demanded of the Lok Dal-BJP State Government curbing of the police and administrative interference in the legitimate democratic

movements of the people against anti-people policies and measures. It also demanded withdrawal of the recent bus fare enhancement by the State Government, and called upon the people to organise a sustained movement against the fascist onslaughts and fiscal savings perpetrated by the Central and the State Governments.

Com. Gyan Singh, Secretary of the State unit of the party, also addressed the open session and called upon the Left and democratic parties to help provide a dependable alternative to both the Lok Dal-BJP and the Congress(I) in the State and uphold the people's cause.

Earlier, the Draft constitution and Draft Theses on National and International situations were deliberated upon by the delegates from January 27 to 29 and adopted unanimously, alongwith the State Secretary's report, with minor amendments. Com. Ashutosh Banerjee conducted the proceedings.

A State Committee of 9 members with Com. Gyan Singh as Secretary was elected unanimously and delegates to the Party Congress were also elected. The Conference ended with the singing of the *Internationale*.

## Red Salute Com. Balai Bose

Comrade Balai Bose, a veteran member of our party, breathed his last on 24th February, 1988. He was attacked with cancer in 1984 and previous to that had a part of his lungs amputated. And inspite of his terrible health condition Comrade Bose had been discharging at the Ganadabi Press all the duties entrusted to him by the party leadership. This sense of dedication to the revolutionary work, making secondary his personal and family problems earned him a distinguished place in party life.

In the very early stage of formation of the party Comrade Bose came in contact with the thoughts of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh and associated himself with the party. From thence went on the battle till he breathed his last.

Leaders and organisers of the party paid respectful homage to Comrade Balai Bose.

RED SALUTE COMRADE BALAI BOSE

## Paris Conference

(Contd. from page 4)

of well meaning, peace loving and forward looking people with revolutionary class conscious working people as the core within it can thrust peace on the war merchants and force the imperialists - capitalists to stop war, put a brake on their war design and even come to agreements on peace and disarmament and complete destruction of all nuclear and other lethal weapons. And just as peace is to be won, thrusting it upon the traders in war, so also for a minimum pro-people fiscal-economic policy it is to be thrust upon the ruling capitalist class.

2. The world movement for 'Disarmament for Development' demands a code of conduct, a consistent stand—it must not support escalation of the military budget of any bourgeois government and intervention by any government in the domestic affairs of the sovereign countries.

3. The movement for 'Disarmament for Development' must be linked with the burning problems of the people's life.

Lastly he urged the delegates of the Conference for raising a "Fund For Nicaragua and Africa" to help them fight against imperialism and severe draught.

### OBSERVE

## BHARAT BANDH

ON 15TH MARCH, 88

AGAINST ANTI-  
PEOPLE POLICIES  
OF RAJIV GANDHI  
GOVERNMENT.



Front portion of the mass rally proceeding towards the venue of the Open Session of Kerala State Conference.

Editor-in-Chief—COMRADE NIHAR MUKHERJEE

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